

IBM Integration Bus

Workload Management Unresponsive Flows

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Hands-on lab built at product code level Version 9.0.0.0

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1. Introduction to Unresponsive Flows

When a message flow has an undetected design flaw, it can become unresponsive. This may be due an excessive "sleep" time in an ESQL command, a poison message causing a backout, or another looping condition. Prior to IIB V9, an operator needed to stop the entire execution group to interrupt the unresponsive flow. This impacts all other flows running in the execution group.

In IIB V9, new function has been added to flush a runaway message flow from the system. There are three methods which can be used to remove the message flow.

- 1. Programmatically check from within a message flow to see if it has been requested to stop
- 2. Manually force a message flow to stop
- 3. Automatically force a message flow to stop

In IIB V9 a message flow developer can use programming APIs to check to see if a request has been made to stop processing within a message flow. This will be discussed in the next section but will not be exercised in this lab. You can briefly read about its capabilities. You can specify and monitor the maximum amount of time that any message flow is allowed to process a message for, and to specify an action to be taken if the time-out value is exceeded. Additionally, manual requests can be made to stop a message flow by restarting the execution group. We will exercise both of these methods in this lab.

2. Programmatically check from within a message flow if it has been requested to stop

In this section we will briefly review the three programming APIs used to stop and remove unresponsive flows. As noted earlier, this section is just for review. Only methods two and three will be exercised in the lab.

The three programming APIs (ESQL, Java™, and .NET) have new functions added to them that allows you to check from within a message flow if the flow has been requested to stop. The function in all three APIs returns a Boolean value of true if a request has been made to stop the message flow.

The functions are described as follows:

ESQL

```
INSTANCESTOPPING();
```

Returns true if a request has been made to stop the message flow. For more information, see INSTANCESTOPPING function in the IIB V9 Infocenter.

Java

```
Static Boolean MbMessageFlow.isInstanceStopping();
```

Returns true if a request has been made to stop the message flow. For more information, see MbMessageFlow Class under <u>Java user-defined extensions API</u> in the IIB V9 Infocenter.

.NET

```
Static Boolean NbMessageFlow.InstanceStopping();
```

Returns true if a request has been made to stop the message flow. For more information, see NbMessageFlow Class under .NET reference in the IIB V9 Infocenter.

3. Manually force a message flow to stop

The mqsistopmsgflow command has been enhanced with a force option to escalate the mechanisms that are used to stop a message flow. A force option –f has been added to the mqsistopmsgflow command to allow you to specify how the message flow can be forced to stop.

Without the force option, the massistopms gflow command sends a request to a message flow to stop it by first waiting for all threads that are used by the message flow to finish. If one of the threads is stuck in an operation, then the message flow stop will never complete.

The force option -f has been added to allow system administrators to specify how the message flow should be stopped. Currently, *restartExecutionGroup* is the only valid option available, that causes the message flow to be flagged as stopped and then to restart the execution group. When the execution group restarts the message flow will be in the stop state.

You can combine using the mqsistopmsgflow command without, and then with, the force option to escalate the mechanisms that are used to stop the message flow.

For example:

```
mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE -e eg1 -m mf1 -w 30 mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE -e eg1 -m mf1 -w 30 -f restartExecutionGroup
```

The first command would first try to the stop the message flow normally and wait 30 seconds for a response. The second command would cause the execution group to restart, but only if the flow was not already stopped.

The non-force version of the massistopmsgflow command has the potential to hang the entire execution group deployment mechanism, but the force version of the massistopmsgflow command will not suffer from the same issue and avoids taking any locks that might cause hanging or deadlocks. The force version of the massistopmsgflow command will still work even if the standard deployment mechanisms are hung.

The same force option is available in the CMP and REST APIs, and within the web user interface.

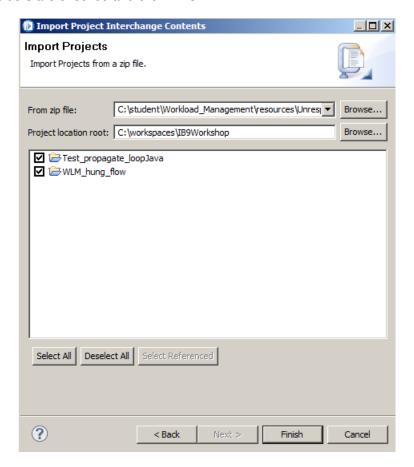
3.1 Import the Application

1. In the Integration Toolkit, import a Project Interchange file.

Navigate to c:\student\Workload_Management\resources\UnrespFlows:

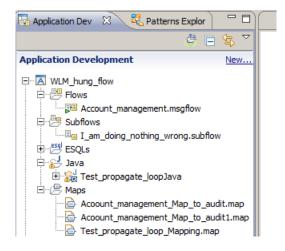
Select WLM_UnrespFlows.zip and then Open.

2. Make sure all folders are checked and click Finish.



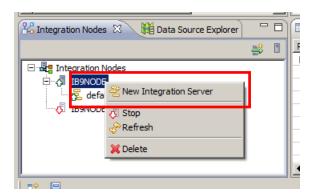
3. You now have an application named WLM_hung_flow. Expand WLM_hung_flow to see the sub folders Flows, Subflows, ESQLs, Java, and Maps.

Review the Account_management.msgflow. This is the flow that we will hang and attempt to force it out of the execution group.

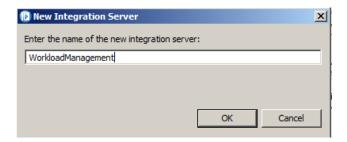


4. If you have already created the WorkloadManagement integration server, you may skip to the next step. Please ensure you are using the correct case, it is important here.

Create a new integration server (execution group) by right clicking on IB9NODE and selecting .New Integration Server.



Name the Integration Server WorkloadManagement.

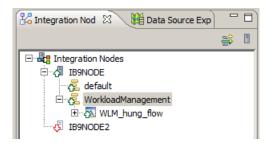


Click OK.

5. Deploy the application.

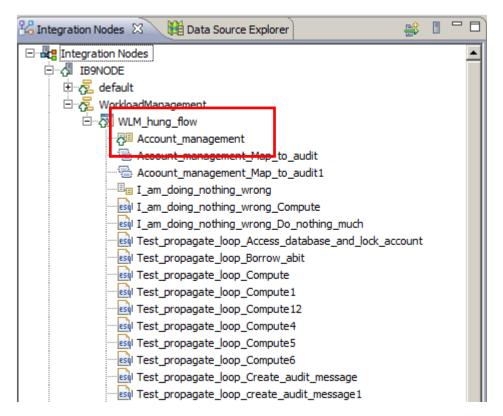
Click the application **WLM_hung_flow** with the left mouse button and drag and drop it onto the integration server (execution group) **WorkloadManagement**.

You will now see the application **WLM_hung_flow** running in the integration server **WorkloadManagement**. Notice that it has an up green arrow to indicate it is running. So both the execution group and the application are running.



Expand the application by clicking the plus sign next to the application.

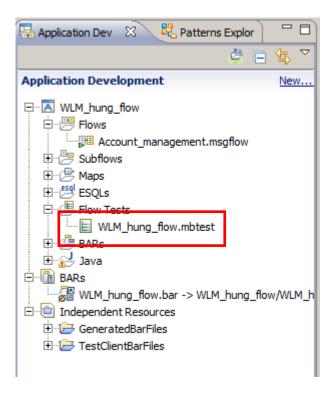
You now see the message flow Account_management running as well. We are not interested in the other deployed artefacts for the purposes of this lab.



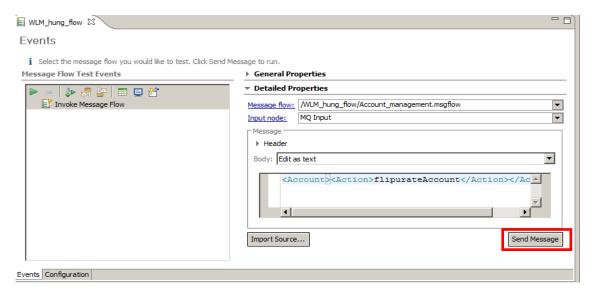
6. Cause the message flows to hang.

You will now put a message on the MQINPUT node of the flow. This message was purposely constructed to hang the flow in a loop, so it would not stop nor respond to normal mqsistopmsgflow commands from the command console or the toolkit.

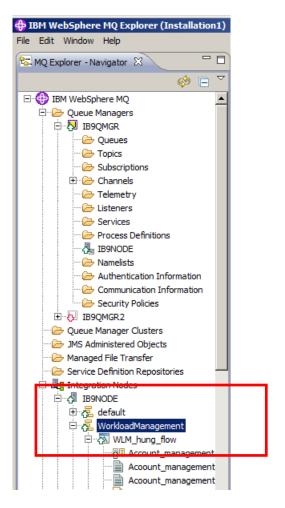
Double click on the WLM_hung_flow.mbtest file under the WLM_hung_flow application, in the folder Flow Tests.



7. Send the message to the Account_management.msgflow by clicking 'Send Message'.



8. Verify that the Account_management flow is still running by viewing IB Explorer or the toolkit.



9. Try to stop the message flow.

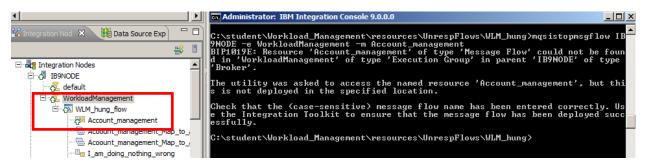
Return to the open command console or open it again if you closed it. Make sure it is the Integration Command Console, not a Windows command prompt.

Try to stop the flow with the following command:

mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE -e WorkloadManagement -m Account_management

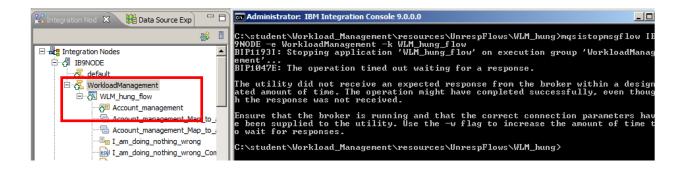
You will be returned an error message and the flow will continue to run.

This is because there is a new parameter on the mqsistopmsgflow command; the **-k** option is needed for applications.



10. Try stopping the application with the following command:

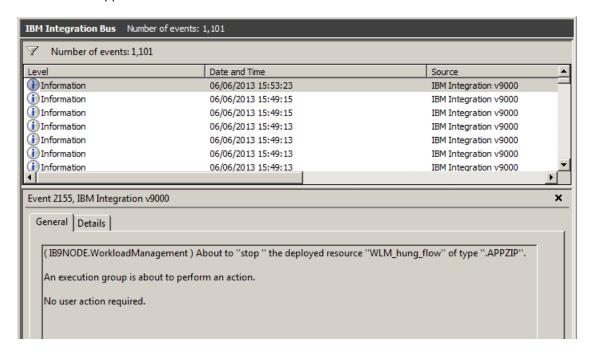
mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE -e WorkloadManagement -k WLM_hung_flow



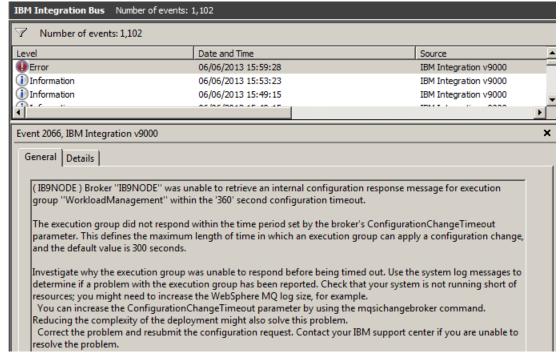
11. Open the Windows Event Log viewer by clicking the icon on the quick start menu.

Expand Custom Views, and select IBM Integration Bus since we want to view only the Integration Bus messages.

You will see an information message that the mqsistopmsgflow had been received and the application is about to be stopped.



12. You should see an error message at a time shortly following the previous message. You may need to refresh the event viewer a number of times.



This appears to be a timeout message because the execution group is not responding because it could not stop the flow. The flow is in fact hung on a looping MQGET node waiting for message to arrive and no timeout set.

13. The -f parameter of the massistopms gflow command now only works with the application. Try to stop the message flow with the new -f parameter. Enter the command:

mqsistopmsqflow IB9NODE -e WorkloadManagement -k WLM hung flow -f

```
Administrator: IBM Integration Console 9.0.0.0
                                                                                                           C:\IBM\MQ$I\9.0.0.0)mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE -e WorkloadManagement -k WLM_hung_fl_
BÏP1033E: Invalid parameters.
The following flag(s) are invalid, missing, or cannot be used together: '-f'.
Reissue the command specifying valid options and flags.
BIP1025I: Stops message flows.
ognicax:
mgsistopmsgflow broker$pec (-g ¦ -e egName) [[(-k applicationName ¦ -z)] [-y li
braryName] (-m flowName ¦ -j)] [-w timeout$ecs] [-v traceFileName] [-f forceMode
 Command options:
'brokerSpec' is one of:
(a) 'brokerName': Name of a locally defined broker
(b) '-n brokerFileName': File containing remote broker connection parameters
(*.broker)
          '-i ipAddress -p port -q qMgr' : hostname, port and queue manager of a re
       all execution groups.
                         n groups.
of the execution group on which to stop message flows. If this
all execution groups on the broker are stopped.
```

This error message is intentional, because the command will only work with the new force parameter -f restartExecutionGroup. The -f parameter of the massistopms allowed command now only works with the application name **and** the parameter restartExecutionGroup.

14. Enter the massistopmsgflow command one more time. This time add the parameter restartExecutionGroup.

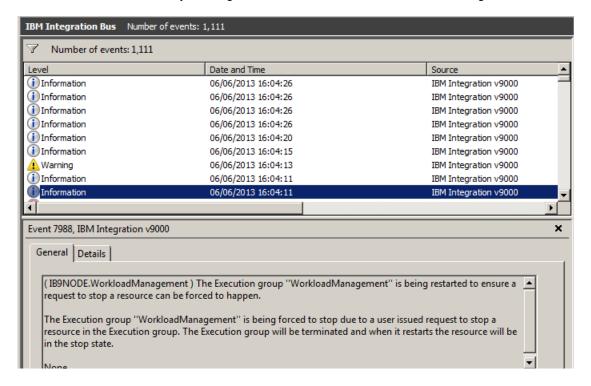
mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE
 -e WorkloadManagement
 -k WLM_hung_flow
 -f restartExecutionGroup

```
Administrator: IBM Integration Console 9.0.0.0

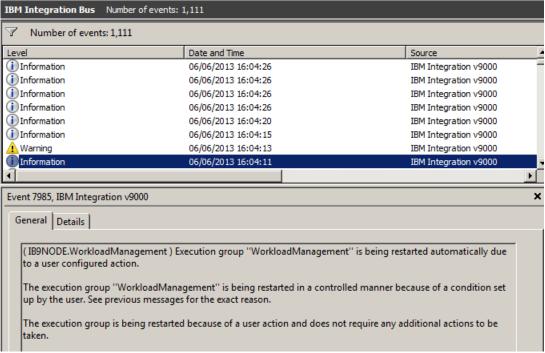
C:\IBM\MQSI\9.0.0.0\mqsistopmsgflow IB9NODE -e WorkloadManagement -k WLM_hung_flow -f restartExecutionGroup
BIP1193I: Stopping application 'WLM_hung_flow' on execution group 'WorkloadManagement'...
BIP1195I: Application 'WLM_hung_flow' on execution group 'WorkloadManagement' is reported as stopped.
BIP8071I: Successful command completion.

C:\IBM\MQSI\9.0.0.0>
```

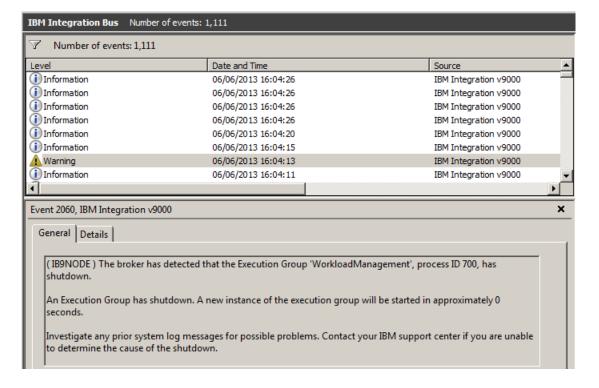
15. Refresh the Event Viewer by clicking the Refresh tab to view additional messages.



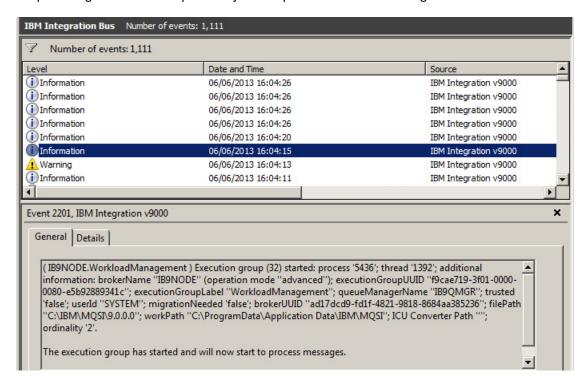
16. You should several information messages at the time you issued the mqsistopmsgflow force command. Start with the first message above the error message and reach each of the succeeding messages to follow what happened due to the force command.



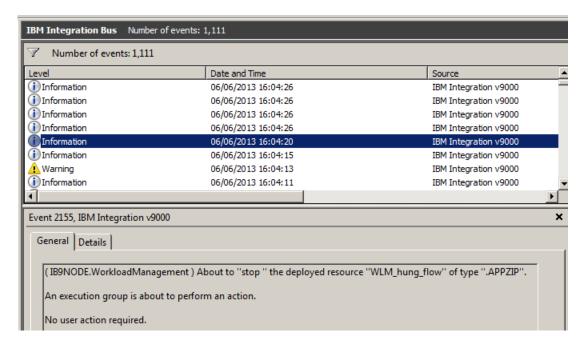
Informational message - the execution group is being restarted due to a user configured action. Next is a warning message that the execution group has shutdown.



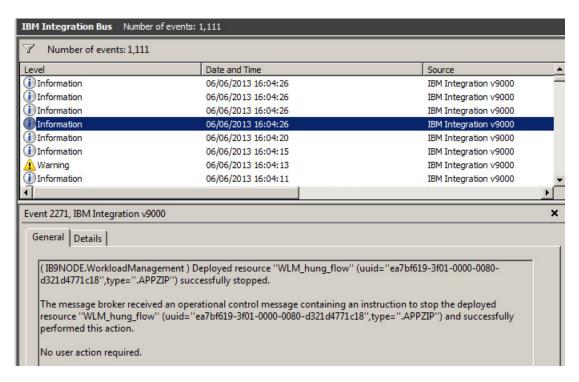
Succeeding the warning message, there are five informational messages explaining what is being done. The first informational message shows that the execution group has restarted. This ensures that other flows keep running and are not impacted by the stop command for the hung flow.



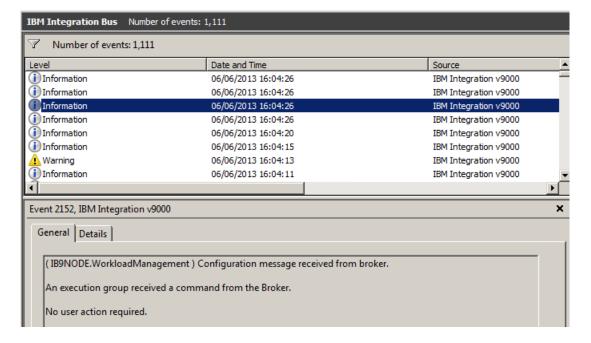
Next informational message shows stopping the flow which is hung.



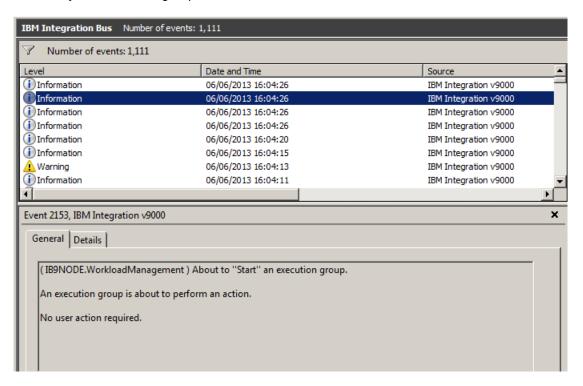
The next message shows that the flow was indeed stopped.



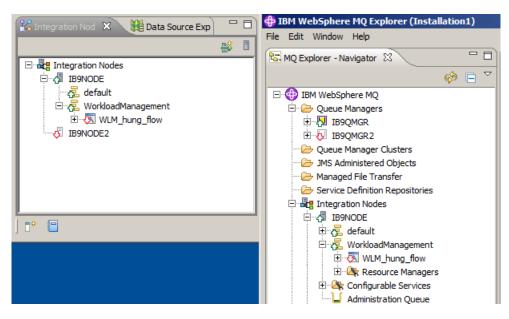
Further informational messages shows the broker sending messages to the execution group.



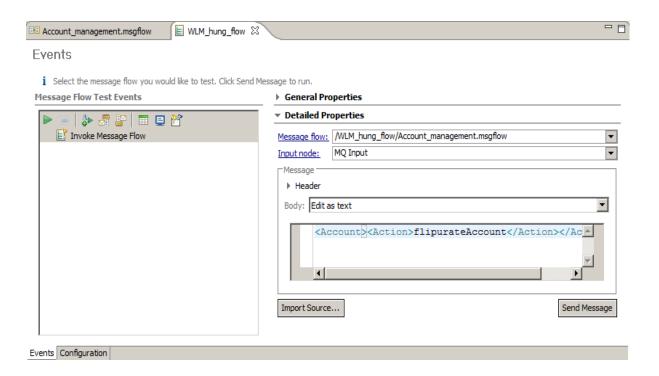
And finally the execution group has started.



Returning to the IIB Explorer in MQ Explorer or in the IIB V9 Toolkit, you will see the execution group 'WorkloadManagement' is started, but the application WLM_hung_flow which contains the culprit flow Account_management is stopped.



17. Close the WLM_hung_flow test window but do not save the test.



4. Automatically force a message flow to stop

Using a policy in the properties of a message flow, you can now monitor message flow processing time and automatically take a specified action if the time-out value is exceeded.

Two message flow properties are provided to specify the maximum amount of time that any message flow can be allowed to process a message and an action to be invoked if the timeout is exceeded:

- processingTimeoutSec maximum time a message flow can process a message before taking a specified action. The time is measured in seconds and is taken from the point a message is received on an input node.
- processingTimeoutAction the action to take. Currently, this action is restricted to none or restartExecutionGroup.

Additionally, an event message is published on a WebSphere MQ topic once the processingTimeoutSec is exceeded and again when the message flow processing has finished.

There are two ways that both of these properties can be set for a message flow:

- Directly within a BAR file.
- As one of the attributes within a workload management policy that is defined within a configurable service.

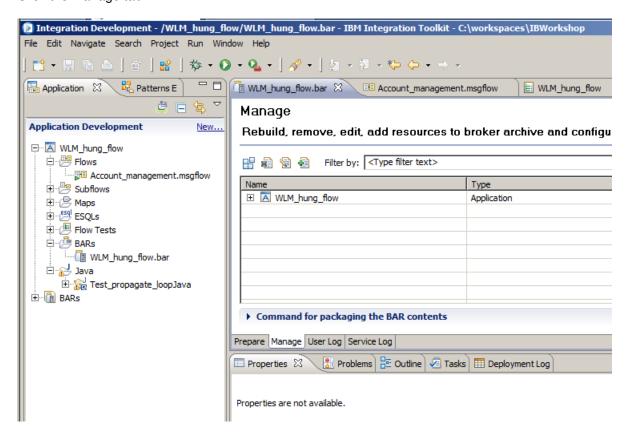
4.1 Setting timeout properties in the barfile

The two properties can be set in the following ways:

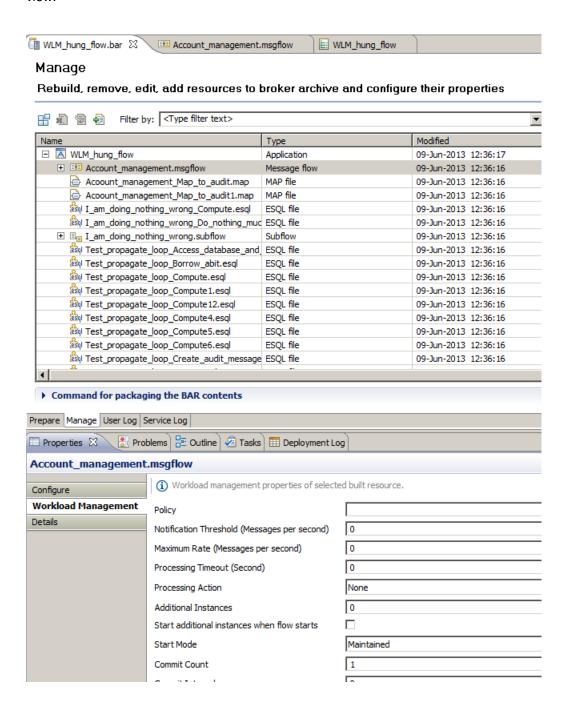
- With the Integration Toolkit editor.
- With barfile editor in the IBM Integration Explorer.
- With the masiapplybaroverride command line.

In this lab, we will demonstrate the barfile editor in the Integration Toolkit.

In the Integration Toolkit, open the barfile WLM_hung_flow.bar (in the WLM_hung_flow application).
 Click the Manage tab.



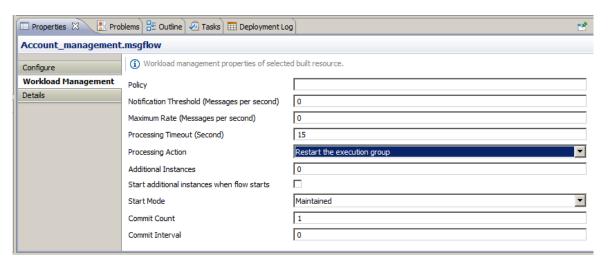
Expand the application in the edit pane by clicking on the + sign.
 Click the Account_management.msgflow to select it and select Workload Management in the Properties view.



3. It is in the Workload Management properties where you will find the properties for automatically stopping a flow. The properties we need are Processing Timeout and Processing Action.

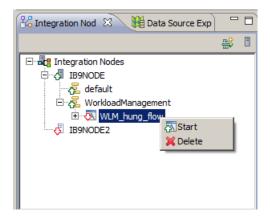
In the Processing Timeout field, type 15 which is the number of seconds a flow will be allowed to process before it is automatically stopped.

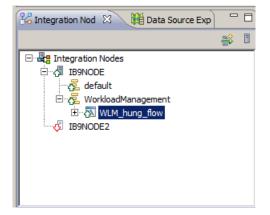
In the Processing Action field, click the down arrow to get the pull-down menu, then select "Restart the execution group".



Press CTRL + S to save the properties in the BAR file.

- 4. Re-deploy the barfile in the usual way, deploying to WorkloadManagement server.
- 5. Restart the application WLM_hung_flow by right clicking on it and select Start.



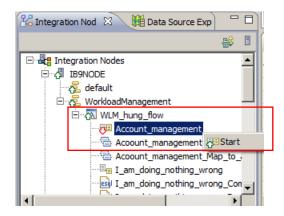


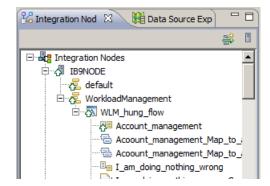
The application is now started.

6. Even though the application was started, please verify that the message flow Account_management is also started. Expand the application to show the flow. Notice that is still stopped because of the explicit command to stop it in the previous section.

We are assuming that some corrective action was taken to correct the errors. So now the flow must be explicitly started.

Right click on Account management and select Start.





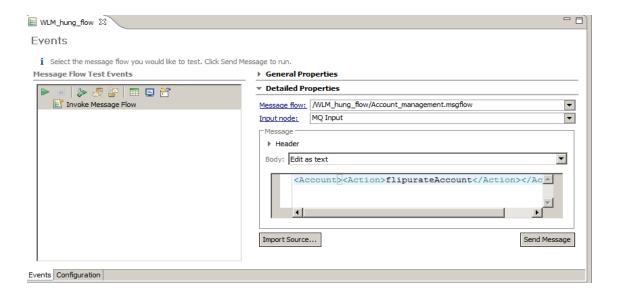
The flow is now started.

7. Now that the flow is redeployed with new properties, we want to hang it again and check to make sure it is automatically removed from the system.

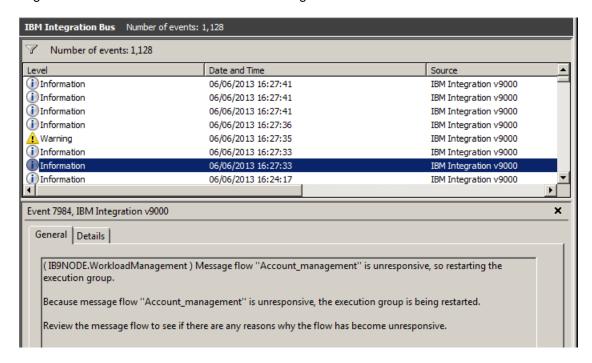
Hang the flow.

Now you will put a message on the MQINPUT node of the flow. This message was purposely constructed to hang the flow in a loop, so it would stop nor respond to normal masistopmsgflow commands from the command console or the toolkit.

Double click on the WLM_hung_flow.mbtest file under the WLM_hung_flow application, in the folder Flow Tests. Click send message as before.

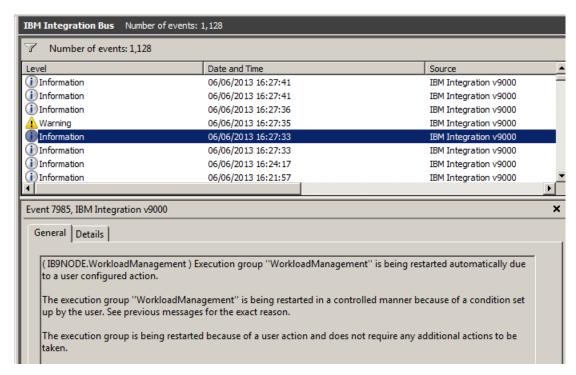


8. Return to the Event Viewer and click on Refresh. You will see seven new messages at approximately the time you wrote the message to the queue IN1 in RFHUtil. You may only see four initially. You may need to wait and click Refresh a number times. There will be one warning message and six informational messages. Click on the first and observe the message.

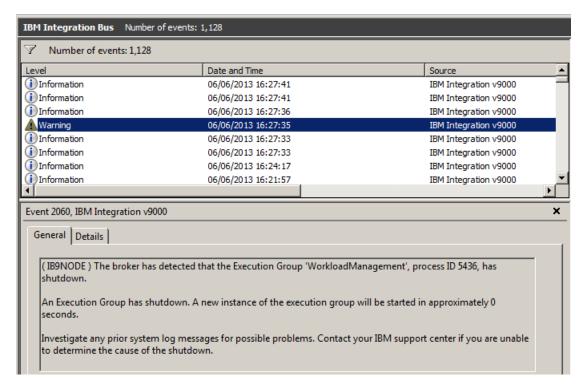


This looks familiar to the messages from the massistopms gflow force command. It is informing us that the message flow is unresponsive and the execution group is restarting.

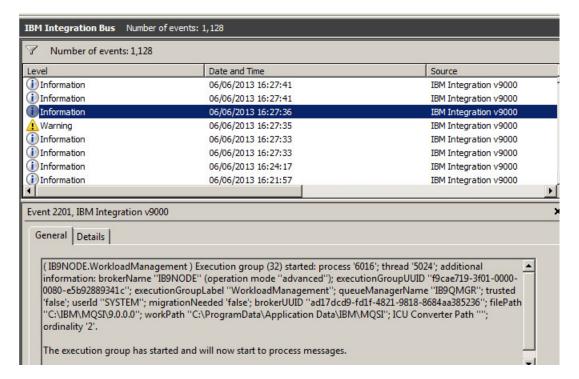
But notice that it is also telling us that this is due to a user configuration, the Workload Management properties for the message flow.



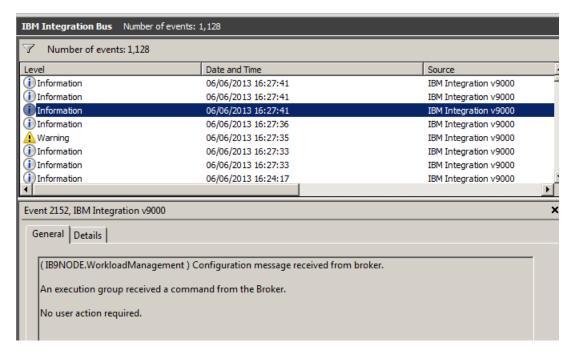
9. Continue with the next message which is a warning message informing us that the execution group has shutdown. This was due to the property Processing action which was set to "Restart the execution group".

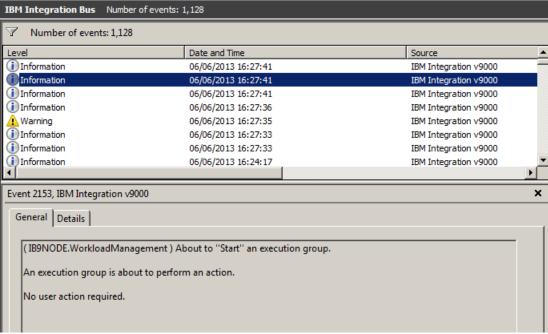


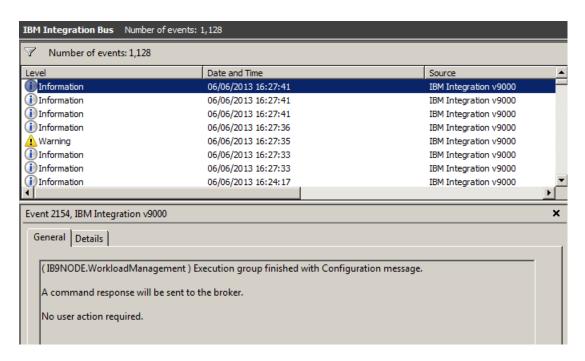
10. The next message tells us the execution group has started.



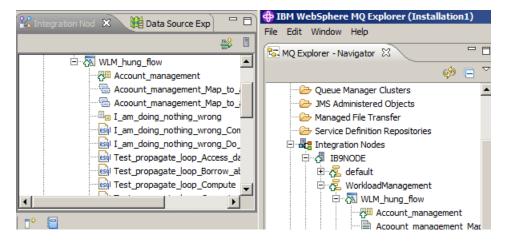
11. The next three messages are concerning the restart of the execution group and configuration messages.







12. Using the properties of the flow to automatically stop a message flow results in different behavior. Return the IIB Explorer in MQ Explorer or the IIB V9 Toolkit and observe the status of the integration node, 'WorkloadManagement' execution group, WLM_hung_flow application, and Account_management message flow. You will see that all are active.



Are you surprised by this behavior? When automatically stopping a flow by property settings, we are telling the integration node that the flow should be stopped after a specified amount of processing time. And the execution group was restarted due the setting for processing action. In this case, we don't know if the message flow was in a loop, only that it used too many cycles, and should be stopped. But when the execution group was restarted, the application and flow were also restarted because that was their previous status. When restarted, it may again be automatically restarted or continue processing until finished. We still have the option to manually force it out completely.

5. Subscribing to notifications of time out processing

Integration Bus V9 publishes messages for various workload conditions. Two of those publications are "processingTimeout" alerts and "processingFinished" alerts for when the message flow processing timeout period is exceeded and when message flow processing has completed when no action for timeout is specified.

The topic strings are available for subscriptions to receive the alerts. You can define subscriptions with the MQ Explorer or write your own applications to subscribe to the publications for the execution groups, applications, and message flows which you are interested in.

5.1 Message flow timeout exceeded event message

Below we describe the conditions and details for the event message that is published when the processingTimeoutSec timeout period is exceeded.

Once the processingTimeoutSec timeout period is exceeded for the message flow, a timeout exceeded XML event message is published.

You can view the message by subscribing to the following topic:

\$SYS/Broker/
brokerName>/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingTimeout/<executionGroup Label>/<applicationName>/<libraryName>/<messageFlowLabel>

where brokerName is the name of the broker, executionGroupLabel is the name of the execution group on that broker, applicationName is the name of the application on that execution group, libraryName is the name of the library on that application, and messageFlowLabel is the name of the message flow that is deployed to the library.

In the situation where the message flow is not contained in either an application or a library, the applicationName or libraryName parameters must be omitted along with their enclosing forward slash (/). For example:

If the message flow is not contained in an application and a library:

\$SYS/Broker/

/*SrokerName>/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingTimeout/<executionGroupLabel>/<messageFlowLabel>

If the message flow is contained in an application and not in a library:

\$SYS/Broker/
brokerName>/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingTimeout/<executionGroupLabel>/<applicationName>/<messageFlowLabel>

Thereafter, if the processingTimeoutAction option has been set to none and processing of the message flow continues to completion, another event message is published that the processing has finished.

However, if the processingTimeoutAction option has been set to restartExecutionGroup the execution group is restarted and no further event messages are published from the message flow.

5.2 Message flow processing finished event message

Below we describe the conditions and details for the event message that is published if a timeout action of none is specified and when the message flow processing finishes.

If the message flow exceeds the processing Timeout Sec timeout period, the action that is defined by the property processing Timeout Action is taken. If the action defined is none, processing of the message flow is allowed to continue and a processing finished XML event message is published once all processing has completed.

You can view the message by subscribing to the following topic:

\$SYS/Broker/<brokerName>/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingFinished/<executionGrou pLabel>/<applicationName>/<libraryName>/<messageFlowLabel>

where brokerName is the name of the broker, executionGroupLabel is the name of the execution group on that broker, applicationName is the name of the application on that execution group, libraryName is the name of the library on that application, and messageFlowLabel is the name of the message flow that is deployed to the library.

In the situation where the message flow is not contained in either an application or a library, the applicationName or libraryName parameters must be omitted along with their enclosing forward slash (/). For example:

If the message flow is not contained in an application and a library:

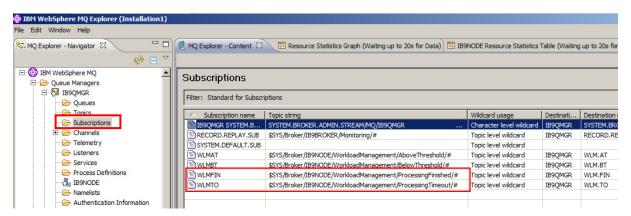
\$SYS/Broker/<brokerName>/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingFinished/<executi onGroupLabel>/<messageFlowLabel>

If the message flow is contained in an application and not in a library:

\$SYS/Broker/<brokerName>/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingFinished/<executi onGroupLabel>/<applicationName>/<messageFlowLabel>

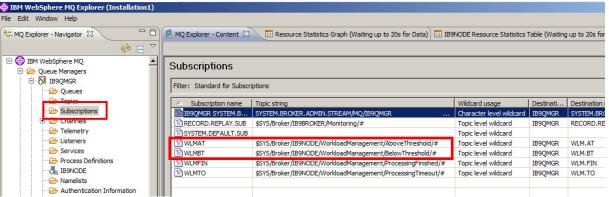
5.3 Review the alerts

When the MQ resources were defined, two subscriptions were created for monitoring the notification threshold. The two subscriptions are WLMTO and WLMFIN. Return to MQ Explorer and click on Subscriptions.

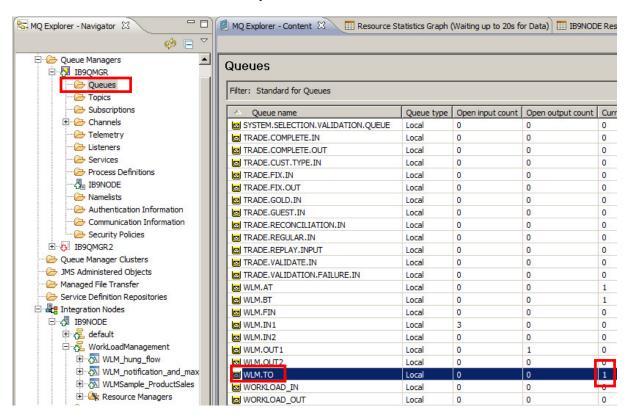


2. You can see that the subscription WLMTO subscribed to alert publications for the topic string \$SYS/Broker/IB9NODE/WorkloadManagement/ProcessingTimeout/# published by the broker. The hash is a wild card so it will receive "timeout" alerts for all execution groups, all applications, and all message flows which have been deployed with a ProcessingTimeout property set. Observe the queue names for the subscriptions WLMTO (WLM.TO) and WLMFIN (WLM.FIN).

Note: You may need to scroll to the right to see the Destination Queue Manager and Destination columns. Some columns were hidden in the screen shot below.



3. Click on Queues and locate the WLM* queues.



4. Look to see if you have any messages in the WLM.TO and WLM.FIN. You should have received some during the above tests.

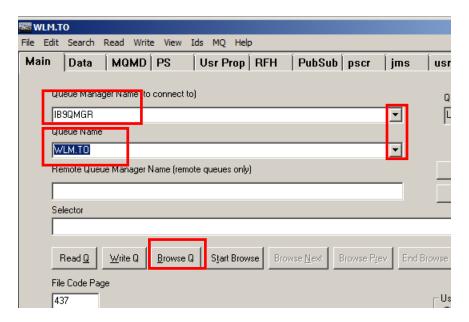
During my test, I received one "processingTimeout" alert when the value for Processing Timeout was set to fifteen seconds. The flow was automatically removed from the system and the execution group was restarted. When the flow was stopped and the execution group restarted, the broker published the "processingTimeout" alert.

At the current time restartExecutionGroup is the only available action for Processing Timeout Action. It cannot be set to None, so we cannot see the "processingFinished" message.

5. Open RHFUtil from the Start button.

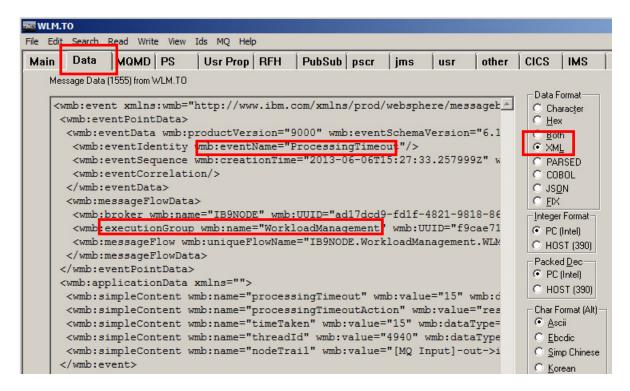
Use the pull-downs to populate the Queue Manager Name with IB9QMGR and the Queue Name with WLM.TO.

Click Browse Q.



Click on the Data tab at the top of the window and click on XML under Data Format to format the data.

Review the XML message which was received. The event was an "ProcessingTimeout". The execution group is identified – WorkloadManagement.



You will need to scroll to the right to see all of the fields. After scrolling right, you will see the application and message flow names. You can also see the processing Timeout value for the message flow and the action restart Execution Group. It also reports the timetaken, thread ID, and the node Trail. You will need to scroll further right to see more of the trail.



6. Unresponsive Flows Summary

In this lab, you saw that there are now three possible methods to stop a runaway message flow and remove it from the execution group.

- 1. Programmatically check from within a message flow to see if it has been requested to stop
- 2. Manually force a message flow to stop
- 3. Automatically force a message flow to stop

We briefly introduced using the APIs to see if a flow has been requested to stop. We then practiced the other two methods and observed the behavior of the integration node.